

TOWN/UNIVERSITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE

**Tuesday, November 13, 2007
Audrey Beck Municipal Building
Council Chambers
4:00 pm**

Minutes

Present: P. Barry, J. Bell-Elkins, T. Callahan, B. Clouette, B. Feldman, J. Hintz, R. Hudd, A.J. Pappanikou, R. Miller, W. Simpson, G. Zimmer

Staff: M. Capriola, G. Padick,

1. Opportunity for Public to Address the Committee

None.

2. October 9, 2007 Meeting Minutes

The minutes of October 9, 2007 were passed unanimously with corrections.

3. Community-Campus Relations

Mr. Hintz stated that he has been conducting outreach to students in off-campus housing on how to be a good neighbor. When Mr. Hintz receives a complaint about an off-campus student occupied home, he visits the property to discuss good neighbor issues such as: recycling, keeping the property clean, parking, responsibility for guests, etc. If applicable, Mr. Hintz will refer a student(s) to the Community Standards Office at UCONN.

Mr. Clouette discussed the noise ordinance and enforcement of.

Ms. Bell-Elkins provided an update on the Mansfield Community-Campus Partnership (MCCP). She mentioned that President Hogan attended a community reception at the Mansfield Community Center in November. She also provided an update on the Guard Dogs Program. Guard Dogs is a program that provides for safe rides for students that have been drinking. WRTD did not renew their contract to provide bus service for the Program; as a result there has been a disruption in service. Guard Dogs hopes to be in service again by spring. An underage drinking prevention grant is currently underway. MCCP is planning on conducting outreach to liquor outlets.

Mr. Barry stated that he has heard that 137 Hillyndale Rd. is problematic (party house). He inquired as to whether or not a community association is being formed. Mr. Hintz stated he has visited 137 Hillyndale Rd. to speak with the students residing at that address. Mr. Hintz noted that he has not

received any complaints about that specific property recently. Mr. Hintz said that some residents are trying to form a formal neighborhood organization to deal with Town-University issues. Mr. Padick added that the neighborhood organization is meeting every 2-3 weeks. The organization represents approximately 5 neighborhoods. The organization is currently gathering facts and intends to articulate some recommendations to an appropriate audience in 4-6 weeks. The neighborhood organization is concerned about the trend of converting single family homes to student rentals. The organization has met with a number of town staff members. Mr. Hintz and Mr. Padick noted that the neighborhood organization is trying to serve as one voice for the neighborhoods. Ms. Bell-Elkins stated that Albany, New York is a good benchmark for a successful community-campus partnership with neighborhood organizations.

Mr. Callahan stated that the reception for President Hogan at the Mansfield Community Center was well received and a nice welcome.

Mr. Callahan discussed the funding issues related to the fare free program for WRTD bus service from Mansfield to Willimantic. Mr. Callahan stated that students help fund the fare free program through their student fees. He also noted that students see a value in the Guard Dog program and asked if the Town would be able to help resolve the issues between the program and WRTD.

4. Community Water and Wastewater Issues

Mr. Callahan stated that the Department of Public Health received and accepted the master plan. The consent order has been closed. The next meeting of the water/wastewater advisory committee will be on December 14, 2007 at 5:30pm at the Bishop Center. Mr. Miller stated that the committee has received 6-7 applications for the vacant committee seat. However, the committee is hopeful to fill the vacancy with a residential customer (homeowner or renter). Interested applicants can send a cover letter and resume to the committee.

5. Mansfield Downtown Partnership

Mr. Callahan provided an update on the permitting process for the project. He stated that construction of Building 1A would likely begin without permits from the DEP and the Army Corps of Engineers; these two remaining permits were not necessary for construction to begin on Building 1A. Building 1A needs to be completed so existing tenants can move in and demolition can begin on the existing structure.

Mr. Callahan provided an update on the parking garage; the General Assembly approved a bond for up to \$10 million for the garage.

6. Future Discussion/Presentation Topics

None discussed.

7. Other Business

Mr. Clouette informed the Committee that the Mansfield Town Council met with the Mansfield Housing Authority. Currently, more than 60% of the Holinko units are occupied by UCONN graduate students. The Housing Authority and Council are concerned about the Housing Authority's ability to house local families as a result of the graduate student occupancy rate. Mr. Callahan stated that he is meeting with the Housing Authority next week to discuss the issue.

Mr. Clouette inquired about the University's proposed compost facility. Mr. Miller stated that the proposed site on Old Colony Road is 5 acres; the compost facility footprint would be a ¼ acre footprint. The compost facility would be used to compost leaves and manure. There are 5 residences within 500 feet of the property; 4 are privately owned and 1 is owned by Connecticut DMR. Mr. Miller stated that his Office (Environmental Policy) would present design and operational plans to abutters in December and to Council in January. Mr. Miller discussed how potential sites were evaluated and the Old Colony Road site was selected. Evaluation criteria included but was not limited to: proximity to wetlands and rivers; rural sites; remoteness of site; convenience to traffic, etc. Mr. Miller stated that his office is sensitive to community issues and concerns which is why they want to conduct the presentations. The office wants to ensure that the compost facility is environmentally sound. The project received \$600,000 in the capital budget. The University fire safety/code staff has reviewed the site and offered suggestions.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Maria E. Capriola
Assistant to Town Manager